

REPORT ON THE GERMAN NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY

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The growth of the German National Democratic Party (NPD) since its establishment in 1964 as well as its entry into the Landtage of Hesse, Bavaria, Schleswig-Holstein, Rheinland-Pfalz, Lower Saxony, Bremen and Baden-Wuerttemberg have been both a source of embarrassment and anxiety for the West German government. Domestic and international reaction to the NPD have branded it neo-Nazi, have compared its appearance and successes to the NSDAP during the Weimar Republic, and have wondered whether the present government has both the will and the means to contain it. In order to determine how far these opinions and observations are correct, it is necessary to examine the following: the development of extremism of the Right in West Germany, the ideology of the NPD, its membership, organisation and voters, its future and the methods available for outlawing it.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RIGHT IN GERMANY

The history of the Right in Germany can not be understood apart from the development of nationalism. The establishment of a separate national consciousness occurred in response to the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars which followed. It was marked by a deep sense of inferiority in relation to the other states of Europe which became a chronic feature of all 19th and 20th century German nationalistic movements. After the collapse of the

Revolution of 1848 in which liberals had attempted to combine nationalism, national unity under Prussian hegemony and republican constitutionalism, the German state developed in opposition to the general democratic West European trends. Although Prussia in response to the revolution conceded a constitution with some republican and democratic characteristics, it was imposed from above and bound national sentiment to a feudal regime. Under Bismarck the national state firmly entrenched itself as the representative and symbol of a conception of order and prestige which was authoritarian. Finally, once a national German state had been established under the Hohenzollerns in 1871, German leaders turned their attention to Germany's position in world politics. The result was the definition of a mission for the national Machtstaat in which it had to quickly overcome the national and imperial lead of the great world powers and participate in the economic and political penetration and division of the colonial world. This ~~wissenschaft~~ sense of mission found its most extreme expression in the Pan-Germanism of the Alldeutschen and led to a number of poorly conceived and executed adventures in Africa and Asia.

During the period before World War I, therefore, the 'political Right' which had developed in part as a countermovement to Liberalism and Socialism, identified itself with a strong leader, a nationalistic authoritarian state, and an expansionistic foreign policy. It attracted to its banner Prussian conservatives, German nationalists and volkish radicals. Volkish radicalism which was to become an important component of the Nazi ideology was an outgrowth of Romantic theories which stressed race, culture and nation in opposition to the Enlightenment emphasis on reason, equality and liberty. These theories which were the basis for an antiwesternism which permeated German culture and politics during the 19th and 20th centuries were given a new vogue after 1860 by Paul de Lagarde and Langbehn. These publicists coupled nationalism and

volkish theories to a fin de siecle belief in racial degeneration and cultural despair and pessimism, and then sought to overcome the despair and degeneration by rejecting pragmatic politics for eschatological movements which would be the means to realize the regeneration of Volk and culture.

The German defeat in 1918 which displaced and discredited the conservative nationalistic ruling elite unleashed the full force of volkish and radical nationalism. The antiwesternism of these groups as well as their morbid fears of degeneration, impotence and inferiority ^{were} expressed ^a itself politically in a violent rejection of the Versailles Treaty and the Weimar Republic. ~~They styled themselves~~ In contrast to the parties which had supported the Weimar Republic, they styled themselves the 'national opposition' and asserted they were the only legitimate representatives of the German Volk and the German nation. Both the middle class conservative Deutsch-nationale Volkspartei of Hugenberg and the NSDAP of Hitler espoused and cultivated elements of this radical nationalism. The German defeat in 1945, however, seemed to mark the end of nationalistic rightist movements.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EXTREMISM OF THE RIGHT IN THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC

In spite of the defeat in 1945, the legal and political order of the West German Federal Republic was opposed as early as 1950 by relatively strong extremist groups of the Right. These groups were composed of die-hard ex-Nazis and attempted to ~~perpetuate~~ perpetuate the National Socialist ideology. The Sozialistische Rechtspartei (SRP), for instance, was particularly successful in 1951 in Lower Saxony. It won 16 seats in the Landtag as a result of gaining 11% of the votes. The Federal Government petitioned the Federal Constitutional

Court to outlaw the SRP ~~according~~ on the basis of Article 21 of the Basic Law as a party whose program and actions were directed towards destroying the democratic system in West Germany. The Court accepted the case and banned the party in 1952. After the 1952 prohibition supporters of the SRP joined other groups and parties on the 'political Right such as the Deutsche Reichspartei, the Deutsche Gemeinschaft, the Deutscher Block, the Deutsche Soziale Bewegung, the Gesamtdeutscher Block and the Bund der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechteten. The Deutsche Reichspartei (DRP) appealing to the tradition of the Right portrayed itself as the 'national opposition.'

Before the establishment of the NPD in 1964 extremist associations and parties of the Right were becoming increasingly fragmentized and isolated. Until 1964 the membership of these groups sank while at the same time the number of groups grew. The Minister of Interior in his yearly report in 1964 on Right extremist movements in the Federal Republic listed the following reasons as causes for this decline:

- 1.the growing consciousness among Germans of the values of the democratic system and their receptivity for a 'European' orientation;
- 2.the narrowness and unattractiveness of the concepts and demands of the Right;
- 3.the increasing distance from the National Socialist Era and the gradual disappearance of the generations responsible for that period; (The NPD would avoid the mistake of the other parties of the Right of appealing entirely to the past and would have the advantage of not being a die-hard post war party, but a party cresting on a genuine wave of a national revival).
- 4.the negative effect of personal differences among leaders of the Right as well as their intolerance for other groups;
- 5.the lack of suitable leaders and an adequate ideology;
- 6.the lack of wealthy contributors;

As a result of this decline Rightist groups made several attempts to establish new parties, to combine old parties and to create temporary electoral alliances. The attempt by the Deutsche Nationale Sammlung during the 1953 federal elections to create a unified movement as well as the attempts in the following years of the Arbeitsgemeinschaft fuer deutsche Politik, die Notgemeinschaft reichstreuer Verbaende and the Deutsche Sammlungsbewegung were equally unsuccessful. As a consequence the call for a union of all forces grew stronger ^{Attitude} with organized extremist groups of the Right.

The functionaries of the DRP who were aware of the decline of their party united with individual representatives of other Rightist groups on November 28, 1964 to form the NPD. The NPD was to be a party for all Rightist groups and individuals, and its announced goal was to gain a minimum of 15% of the votes for itself. The official dissolution of the DRP occurred on December 4, 1965. After years of ineffectiveness the rebirth of extremism of the Right and neo-Nazi trends in the Federal Republic reached a new high point with the appearance of the NPD.

Beside the NPD, the Aktionsgemeinschaft Unabhaengiger Deutscher (AUD) was established on May 15, 1965 as a party for all Rightist groups. The AUD accused the NPD that it would hinder the attainment of national unification of the German people because the NPD was so antiquated in its political conceptions which had not yet even reached the year 1933. On the other hand, the NPD characterized the AUD as an extremist sect of the Right whose neutralistic program could scarcely be distinguished from Communist policies towards Germany.

The remaining extremist groups of the Right were drawn more or less strongly into the wake of the NPD. This included the Reichsverband der Soldaten

(RdS), the Aktion Oder-Neisse (AKON), the Deutsche Soziale Bewegung (DSB), the Deutscher Block (DB), the Bund Heimattreuer Jugend (BHJ) and the Vereinigung Wiking-Jugend (WJ). Although these groups saw that it was essential to have the NPD as the electoral party for the national camp, they were still unwilling to give up their organizational independence. The AUD quickly became a minor splinter group with little resonance among the Right.

After the Bundestag election of 1965 in which the NPD received 2% of the vote (664,193) and no seats (AUD 0.2%, 52,637), the party's leadership decided in the future to concentrate its political activities on Landtag elections. Above all, the NPD was out to win the 'undecided voter' and to attract voters from reservoirs which had not previously been approached by the Right.

The first success was in the Hesse election held on November 6, 1966. Hesse had been governed since 1949 by the SPD government of Minister President Zinn. The attempt was made to explain away this ~~result~~ unexpected result by pointing to temporary and local economic difficulties. Von Thadden, at that time a member of the executive committee of the NPD and not yet party chairman, advanced different reasons. First, and ~~for~~ most important was the existence of a new generation which was growing up now and had had nothing at all to do with the origin and transgressions of the Third Reich. This generation could not understand why it should constantly be made to feel ashamed about its' country's past and be forced to continue to pay reparations to victims of the Nazi regime. Although this explanation ^{was} more in the nature of an appeal to young people (a group with which the NPD has not been very successful) it did contain an element of truth which will be discussed later. Second, a rebirth of national consciousness had given new strength to the desire for reunification. Finally, NPD voters were expressing a negative attitude toward the Bundestag parties.

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NPD successes in Hesse were duplicated in the following elections:

Bavaria	7.4%	November 20, 1966
Schleswig-Holstein	5.8%	April 23, 1967
Rheinland-Pfalz	6.9%	April 23, 1967
Lower Saxony	7.0%	June 4, 1967
Bremen	8.8%	October 1, 1967
Baden-Wuerttemberg	9.8%	April 28, 1968

In the Landtag election in Hamburg on March 23, 1966 the NPD could not overcome the 5% barrier, and for strategic reasons the NPD did not take part in the Landtag elections in Nordrhein-Westphalen on July 10, 1966 and in Berlin on March 12, 1967. The first gains in Bavaria came in spite of the efforts of Franz Josef Strauss and the CSU to ride of the 'national wave.' In addition, the NPD was successful in electoral districts which had previously voted SPD, CDU, CSU and FDP indicating that its appeal at least at the local level was based on sentiments which were widely diffused in West Germany.

In the April, 1968 Baden-Wuerttemberg elections the SPD suffered the largest loss declining from 33% of the vote in 1965 to 29% in 1968. Once again the circumstances surrounding the NPD success seemed to indicate that its appeal was based on more than economic discontents. Baden-Wuerttemberg had always been considered a region in which moderation prevailed and extremism had never obtained a firm stronghold. Secondly, the only group politically to the left of the coalition parties which might have been expected to attract 'protest' voters did not even win the 5% of the vote necessary to gain a seat in the Landtag. Thirdly, the NPD achieved its success against the

intensive campaigning of the two coalition parties. Reasons advanced to explain the NPD victory were:

1. dissatisfaction among left-minded elements within the SPD who felt that the party had betrayed its traditional radical position when it joined the CDU to form a coalition;

2. recent student unrest which in turn had ~~br~~ brought created some anxiety among German citizens ~~who~~ and reactivated a nostalgia for a system based on order and discipline;

3. the 'poor image' of the parliamentary system in West Germany which had developed into a kind of isolated club without maintaining ample contact with the general public; and the

4. appeal to feelings of social and economic insecurity among the middle class.

Finally, the 'relatively' poor showing of the NPD in the October, 1968 municipal elections in Hesse, the Saarland and Baden-Wuerttemberg were attributed to the following reasons:

1. the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia and the German voter's recognition that the Federal Republic needs protection from the USA and other allies.

2. the first clear public stand of the coalition parties against the NPD;

3. the fact that the CDU, CSU, ~~and~~ SPD and FDP absorb rightist trends and attitudes;

4. the economic upward trend and the decline of the 'protest' vote;

5. and the scandals, personal rivalries, ~~extrinaxpax~~ and lack of organization in NPD, and the criminal past of candidates, all of which may have counted more in a municipal election than in a state or national election.

In national elections personalities of candidates tend to be less important than party lists and ideologies.

In part NPD electoral victories were due to the intensity with which the party campaigned in Laender where elections were upcoming. The attempt to explain away NPD victories by appeals to economic difficulties, however, seemed to be disproven by surveys which revealed that it had few supporters in areas with deteriorating economic conditions such as West Berlin and Nordrhein-Westphalen. Although economic dislocations as well as remnants of authoritarianism and fascistic attitudes could in part explain the attractiveness of the NPD to some voters, the NPD appeal to a 'national wave' seemed to indicate that a full understanding of its successes would require a discussion of two questions. First, to what extent was the NPD appealing to groups which were rooted politically in the past. Second, to what extent are there conditions unique to the Federal Republic which help to explain the NPD's victories. Interior Minister Benda's observation that lessons drawn from electoral campaigns raised doubts as to the efficacy of warning against the NPD by harking back to the crimes of Nazism seemed to support the conclusion that the climate in which the NPD was thriving was quite different than that which had existed immediately after the war. This was reflected in the reaction of many voters, particularly among the younger generations, who considered the ^{unfair} reference to Nazi policies to defame the NPD. They appeared to prefer the major parties to put forth counter arguments to the programmatic statements of the NPD.

THE IDEOLOGY AND PROGRAM OF THE NPD

In order to avoid the fate of the SRP the NPD has attempted to appear democratic in organization and ideology. Organizationally these efforts have included a purge of the party's executive committee to reduce the number of old Nazis among its members, a control of speeches by party representatives to prevent potentially harmful statements from being made, and the disciplining of party members who needlessly expose the party to criticism. Ideologically, the party has attempted to camouflage itself through Article 2 of its statutes (adopted June 18, 1966) which states: "The NPD is a political party in the sense of Article 21 of the Basic Law. It pledges itself to

western, Christian culture and stands on the free fundamental order of our political, social, economic, and intellectual life. According to this free fundamental order freedom of belief, conscience, religion and creed are inviolable." The results of an analysis of its program, speeches, and the party newspaper Deutsche Nachrichten stand clearly in contrast to the ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxxxx~~ avowed democratic faith of the NPD.

A) While the NPD program attempts to contain something for everyone, the main element which has a strong appeal beyond the confines of the extreme Right is the effort to reactivate nationalism. The appeal to an extreme Gefuehlsnationalismus and national ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ resentment is a reaction against the collective guilt and shame which the NPD asserts was unjustly forced upon the German people through the capitulation in 1945 and the reeducation program of the Allies. The appeal to nationalistic sentiments has been achieved through the demagogic use of issues such as collective guilt, the statute of limitations for Nazi war criminals, war crimes trials such as the recent Frankfurt Auschwitz trials which are characterized as 'a continuation of anti-German Nürnberg and Jerusalem legal decisions', and the 'extortionist' reparations policies of other countries, particularly Israel, which use the German sense of guilt. The receptivity to these appeals is a reflection of the extent to which a general sentiment now exists among many groups in Germany ~~xxen~~ nearly twenty-five years after the termination of the war to finally overcome the past and the guilty conscience which it has produced.

Although the NPD has attempted to deal with the above-mentioned issues with as little reference as possible to the Jews-they have even at times hidden behind a Philosemitismus- and although anti-Semitic insinuations are entirely absent from the party program, there is a cautious and clear anti-Semitism present. For instance in ~~the~~ its struggle with Germany's anti-Semitic past the NPD has attempted to minimize crimes against the Jews by ~~claim-~~ ^{ing}

that those killed numbered only a few hundred thousand at most ~~and~~ ^{or} that their deaths were the unfortunate and unavoidable consequences of military activities. In addition, this attitude has been reflected in the ~~no-less~~ ~~unpleasant~~ struggle with the question of the extent to which reparations- if at all- to Israel are justified. This is combined with efforts to brand the Israelis as racists and nationalists, a constant criticism of the friendly policy of the Federal Government towards Israel, and an ~~exaggerated~~ ~~emphasis~~ emphasis of NPD friendship for Nasser and the Arab world.

The extent to which the NPD is riding on the crest of a 'national wave' based on the strong desire to finally be freed from chronic self-defamation and self-defilement is reflected both in the NPD's constant appeal to the generations which were neither incriminated by nor burdened by the past, and the response of the war generation (ages 40-59) to this appeal. According to the NPD these generations 'need a party which not only ~~contests~~ contests the sole collective guilt of the Germans for the misery of the world, but is active politically to limit guilt to the guilty, to the guilty in all the world.' One method the NPD leaders are constantly advancing for dealing with the past is the necessity for creating a 'true historical image' for the present. The years 1933-45, however, provide few opportunities through which to ~~an~~ assuage the bad consciences of the present which burdens Germany, except an outright falsification or distortion of the past. The great ^{danger} ~~problem~~ inherent in this problem of tradition and historical image is that the failure to come to grips with it, if it can be done at all, continues to prevent the present population of Germany from developing a self-respect which is necessary for the continued stability of the current political system. Thus, apart from the NPD appeal to ~~nationalism~~ radical nationalism, the current national revival is an expression of the desire to cope with this problem. Whether it will be

successfully identified in a moderate form with the existing system is another question. In any case, the NPD has capitalized on this broadly diffused desire to overcome the past by combining a number of nationalistic appeals in its ideology. These appeals include traditional German conservative nationalism, patriotism, weak and strong xenophobia which at times borders on an integral nationalism reminiscent of 19th century movements and ethnocentrism.

B). The corruption of Germany culturally , economically and militarily by foreigners is used to explain the sense of present day impotence and inferiority among the German people. This corruption has led to a total sellout of all those moral values which are the basis for a healthy nation and state. The NPD has used this issue to provide itself with the mission to regenerate the German people spiritually. The continued appeal to moral and cultural ~~decadence~~ ~~depravity~~ as well as the rejection of modern culture* and the modern world reveal the extent to which the NPD has incorporated the German traditions of cultural pessimism, volkish radicalism and eschatological goals into its program.

The existence of moral and cultural decline is also explained by racial theories based on the inequality of peoples. The domestic expression by the NPD of these theories is a condemnation of Spanish, Italian, Greek and Iranian guest workers in Germany for bring racially impure qualities into the Federal Republic which are dangerous to the German people. The guest workers who bear the brunt of the NPD's racial resentment are, in part, surrogates ^{the} for the Jews, a group against which the NPD can not openly move. Internationally the NPD asserts that the white race is threatened by the rise of the colored third world.

* The attack levelled against modern art as degenerate and inspired by Bolshevists and the Jews who stand behind Bolshevism is a typical example of the use the NPD makes of theories originally propagated by volkish radicalism and the NSDAP.

Once again, the NPD has zealously sought to avoid using older racial terminology which would have claimed that the German Volk and the Nordic race were threatened, by substituting the white race as a surrogate. The 'world historical' mandate of the whites is to insure that they gain the upper hand over the chaotic colored peoples of the world. This mission has already been undertaken by the Union of South Africa, Portugal and the Goldwater movement in America.

The reason why the Germans can not save themselves in the face of this threat is that they have been prevented from developing a national consciousness which would permit them to recreate a Volk with a unique personality. Only through an education which leads to a sense of national dignity, which in turn displaces the collective guilt of the German people, can the youth be inspired with a new idealistic nationalism which will enable them to deal with this problem.

C). Politically the NPD has attempted to discredit the democratic system of the Federal Republic by asserting that the current system was forced upon Germans by the Allies and their traitorous creatures the 'Lizenzparteien.* In addition, the constitutional order of West Germany is not a natural expression of German culture and spirit. Thus the NPD characterizes the present regime as an ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Ersatzdemokratie which is governed by a 'degenerate party oligarchy' through a 'wild discussion club' called parliament. These factors have led to the result that the Federal Republic is not a state with a capital S, but only an economic system which attempts to pass itself off as a state. This system is ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ ruled by parties which have no Staatsgefuehl and are dominated by

*Lizenzparteien refers to the fact that only those parties were permitted to organize or reorganize by the Allied Military Government which were granted licenses.

an oligarchy of competitive egoistic groups. What is needed to overcome this system is a party government directed toward the good of the national state and opposed to the self-centered interests of groups. While out of power, therefore, the NPD describes itself as the 'national opposition' which, once in power, can fulfill this role.

By rejecting pluralism as being synonymous with anarchy, the NPD manifests its deep-seated rejection of a democratic, pluralistic understanding of political conflict. It opposes to political, social and economic pluralism a political system based on a Volk united by a single national will. This vulgar democratic theory, which is a continuation of similar theories advanced by the Nazi jurist Carl Schmitt, leads inevitably in the NPD program to a demand for the introduction of plebiscitarian features in the present ~~GERMANXPOLITIKAKANXXXNTERXXXTHRXBMTKRNK~~ political system.

Finally, the political attack on pluralist democracy and democratic individualism is combined with older racial and biological theories of politics. The key document for these theories is a speech by Dr. Erich Anrich at the party congress of the NPD held in Karlsruhe in June, 1966. The Deutsche Nachrichten described the speech as the 'intellectual foundation' of NPD politics. In the speech Anrich presented a collectivist theory of politics based on race and biological determinism which he, in turn, coupled to an authoritarian conception of the state. Among other thoughts Anrich asserted were that:

1. Volk is a 'biologischer Organismus besonderer Artung und Keimkraft, der den Staat bemannt';
2. Volkstum is the 'Artkraft der als biologischer Organismus verstandenen Volkes';
3. Staat is 'die zum Handeln herausgetretene Ganzheitskraft von Volk und Volkstum'; and

4. Souveraenitaet is the 'Befehlsgewalt des Staats ueber die einzelnen Menschen und die Volksgesamtheit.'

In addition the concept of law is defined in a fashion reminiscent of the Nazis not by the ideal of justice but by the 'Volkstum und seine Gemeinschaft. Therefore the NPD demands 'eine Neuformulierung des Rechts des Ganzen ueber den Einzelnen und seine Gruppenbildung.'

The ultimate result of the NPD political program combined with biological and racial theories is the suppression of individualism and the legitimation of authoritarianism and elitism based upon plebiscitarian democracy.

NPD MEMBERSHIP

73 % of those who direct the party, 67% of its key people on the Land level and 40% of its workers on the local level have marked political pasts.

Political Origins of NPD Members and Functionaries (1968)

(with questionable past.)

Function	No. of Officials	NSDAP before 1933 and high NS officials	SRP and other forbidden Org.	DRP	Other Rightist Org.	Total (corrected for double membership)
DN*Partners	12	9	2	11	3	42 (100%)
Federal Speech makers	11	6	3	4	4	10 (91%)
Party Exec Committee	30	12	7	12	12	22 (73%)
Officials in Laender	446	90	36	162	120(ca.)	300ca. (67%)
Landtag members	60	12	6	20	10	29 (60%)
NPD Members 28,000		2400(ca.)	450(ca.)	3300ca	5300(ca.)	9800 (ca.) (35%)

(* Partners of the NPD weekly newspaper Deutsche Nachrichten)

But only 35% of the party members have questionable political pasts indicating that for the overwhelming majority of the NPD members the older Nazi functionaires in the executive committee are not typical of the party as a whole.

During the first months of its existence the NPD was constantly faced with the threat of becoming overaged. Until the end of 1965, for instance, the portion of members between 45 and 65 was 10% higher than the proportion of this group (27%) in the entire population. On the other hand NPD members between ages 18 and 30 . a group which forms 28% of the population, were underrepresented by 10%. Thus the average age of the NPD members was 50 years old.

The average age dropped to 43 in 1966 as more members under 45 joined the party. In spite of this development the NPD had not yet been able to reach its goal of making the party ~~xxxxxxx~~ a party of youth. The party had only been able to reach the average age of the entire population.

At the beginning of 1968 party membership could be broken down sociologically in the following way:

Academics(principally from the older generations)higher public officials, officers and students.....	4%	
Mittelstaendische Professions:		
a)Independents:store owners, tradesmen and farmers.....	27%	
b)public servants, professional soldiers.....	6%	50%
c)employees.....	17%	
Workers:		
a)in small shops.....	16%	32%
b)industrial workers.....	16%	
Married women.....	5%	
Pensioners and Rentiers.....	9%	

Changes in professional structure in the past thirty years(which are simply continuations of trends during the last half century) statistically indicate which groups might be receptive to the NPD.

Shifts in German Occupation Structure (in % of total labor force)

	1939	1950	1961	1954 (United States)
Self-employed (Business and professional)	13.5	13.5	10.6	7.4
Farmers	14.9	12.5	8.7	5.9
Farm Workers	3.9	5.0	1.6	4.1
Manual Workers	46.7	47.1	48.2	51.7
Salaried Employees and officials	19.3	21.9	30.4	30.8
Unclassified	1.8	---	---	---
Total	100	100	100	100

The most marked declines were among the self-employed, farmers and farm workers, groups which were particularly receptive to the NPD. In addition, the most marked increase was among salaried employees who were seen as a threat to older established groups and who themselves, because of certain changes in class structure which their rapid development reflects, were overly concerned with matters of prestige, status and social legitimation. The proportion of farmers in the NPD is 13% which ^{is} 6% above their proportion in the population. Civil servants make up 7% of the NPD members and 7% of the population. Self-employed business men compose 13% of the NPD and only 10% of the population. The middle class contributed ^{a substantial} ~~their~~ share of NPD members just as it did to the Nazis. Within this group support from the lower middle class has dropped. This may come as a surprise for it was exactly this group which was said to have made up the majority of Nazi supporters. In addition, the upper class and higher middle class still make up for a relatively high proportion of NPD members.

Finally, although workers are not represented in significant numbers among NPD members and voters, they still are present. This is significant if it is recalled that workers hardly supported the NSDAP. One reason advanced to explain why the NPD has been able to make inroads among workers is that the well organized ideological worker movement of the pre-war period which held workers together firmly, has broken down since 1945. Consequently some workers feel socially and psychologically adrift and are therefore more vulnerable to nationalistic appeals.

NPD VOTERS

The NPD has exploited discontent with politics, anxiety about existence and status deprivation to attract voters. Both NPD members and voters seek protection from the modern world and its constant emphasis on change and adaptation as well as protection from the impenetrability of highly bureaucratized economic, social and political relations. Thus both NPD members and voters attempt to regress into a political romanticism which is oriented towards strong leadership and to indoctrinate themselves through propaganda with a pseudo-philosophy. Economically both members and voters are attracted by the image of a pre-industrial economy which is combined with some form of dirigism. The belief in these goals is, in turn, coupled to the acceptance of the primacy of the ends of the state before that of the individual.

~~Attkin~~ Among NPD voters the majority (61%) are men. Although the party has been making major efforts to attract the youngest generations, these generations have shown little interest for the NPD program. This is reflected in the fact that while ~~thaxpaxkyxisxasupposedxnfxt~~ 18% of the party members are younger than 30, the population at large is composed of 28%. The number of NPD supporters

between 30 and 40, however, corresponds to their overall proportion in the general population. The core of party supporters is in the age bracket between 45-59 (37% of NPD voters). This is the generation which experienced Nazism at a crucial stage in their personal development. When the Nazi era opened they were between 11 and 25 and when the Third Reich collapsed they were between 23 and 37. The age group 30 to 45 makes up 23% of NPD voters, while refugees and expelles who compose 23% of the population provide 28% of the vote.

There is some debate, on the basis of diverging public opinion surveys, as to the contribution of Catholics and Protestants to the NPD voter reservoirs. The population is composed of 52% Protestant and 43% Catholics, and the result of one survey indicates that 63% of NPD voters are Protestant while only 28% are Catholic. Another study has reached the conclusion that although in the early days of the NPD there was a majority of Protestant supporters, their proportion has now decreased considerably. If the second survey is correct, its results are important because the Nazis had their largest reservoirs among Protestants.

The electoral successes of the NPD have been mainly in the country, in villages and towns with populations between 10,000 and 100,000. This may be a reflection of the fact that in small and medium sized towns social relations still contain some elements of a pre-industrial Stadtgemeinschaft, although this has been under continuous attack for forty years by the increasing concentration and bureaucratization of the economy. Most large cities and

electoral districts which have had a traditional bond to one of the large parties have been immune to NPD propaganda. The NPD has had its poorest results in areas which are predominantly Catholic, in industrial centers and in large cities.

Nationalism and the West German Federal Republic

The Nazi epoch which ended on May 8, 1945 is now called the 'Zero Hour' in West Germany because it symbolized the deep rupture in the continuity of German cultural, spiritual and political history which had occurred between 1933-1945. Socially, economically and geographically the structure of the old Reich was either destroyed or modified. Politically, the emotionally charged atmosphere of the Third Reich was replaced by a rejection of ideologies, and a political sobriety and practicality which had not been a characteristically German. In the years after the establishment of the Federal Republic in 1949 'Nazism' remnants of 'Nazism' appeared in splinter rightist parties, occasional vague press reports about meetings of former Waffen-SS members, and the expose of the probable existence of a network to aid Nazis whose protective camouflage had been penetrated. Attempts to interpret these signs as symptoms of the rebirth of Nazism, however, were false.

The Basic Law drafted in 1948-49 became the foundation for strong 'democratic' parties, stable political majorities, and institutional continuity which contrasted with the chaos of the Weimar Republic. With the quest for security, anti-communism and fear of the East became two of the main ideological bonds- if not the principle Ersatz ideology- for keeping together a basically apolitical population that had lost a sense of a common

political tradition which could be the foundation for consensus. If the population was not impelled by love to obey the Basic Law, it was sufficiently chastized by its experiences under Hitler to avoid toying with dangerous political ideas. If it could not find representatives of the new state who could evoke a strong allegiance, it was content with the routine and reliability of the republic as long as the republic could provide economic, social and political security.

Growing disillusion about the course of European and German unification, symptoms of economic difficulties and the effects of East-West detente and Gaullism in the late 1950s and early 1960s heralded the end of the ideologies and policies which had been the basis for the relative stability of German political and social attitudes during the Adenauer period. These trends emerged and merged simultaneously to activate sentiments and voter reservoirs which the NPD could exploit.

First, the groups to which the NPD has appealed have a common characteristic: the experience of or the fear of a loss of social status. ~~xxxx~~ Among these groups were farmers, tradesmen, independent employers, public officials, teachers and ~~xxxx~~ soldiers who in the Wilhelmian Empire and even as late as the Third Reich ~~xxxx~~ were able to derive their social legitimation as staatstragende Staende. The destruction of the political and social basis of the Obrigkeitsstaat destroyed the institutional guarantor of their prestige and status. In addition, the expansion of the new middle class of the service sector of the economy (salaried employees of all types) as well as the expansion of large capitalist concerns⁴ now challenged⁵ the last vestiges of their power and self-respect. Many of the members of these threatened and displaced groups reached back in self-defense to a romanticized era before the war. The neo-nationalism of the NPD which claims to be modern is attractive to these groups because

it corresponds to their conservative social and political ideals. In addition, this nationalism of conquered and divided post-imperial Germany is imprinted with a deep seated consciousness of inferiority. It has led to an ideological overcompensation in the same way that the nationalism of Fichte did.

Second, analyses of electoral groups to which the NPD has appealed indicate that the 'overcoming of the past' as well as the 'overcoming of the present' are essential elements of the social and psychological motivation which has an affinity for nationalism. Although government officials have spoken out against the past and have reluctantly supported the public prosecutor in Ludwigsburg who is charged with hunting down war criminals, the key to the survival of the fledgling Bonn Republic was the reincorporation of Nazis and fellow travellers into the political, social and economic systems of West Germany. It is this large, amorphous, heterogenous group, which ranges from left to right and from elite to lower class that is increasingly attracted by nationalism as a means to gain self-respect and free themselves from the past. ~~ThusxaxldxNaxixxaxx~~ ~~notxonlyxinxthexRR~~. This group which is bound together only by its common experience under Nazis, is dispersed among all West German parties and in all levels of the social structure and the economic system.

Finally, national conservatives who have not been able to find ~~adequatex~~ adequate means through which to express themselves in the past twenty years, now want to take part openly in politics instead of having to content themselves with forming right wings in the principle parties. The national conservative camp does contain among its members and adherents convinced democrats. It is extremely difficult for them to espouse nationalism, because they must fight against and differentiate themselves from the reactionary and radical nationalists who have both identified Volk, Nation and Reich with themselves and given these concepts

such bad names. If the worst reactionary nationalists look to the past, the better conservative nationalists seek a liberation of nationalism from resentment, false ideologies and emotions that have given the vocabulary of nationalism confusing and double meanings. If they can achieve this they hope it will lead to a parting from the trauma of the Third Reich which continues to lurk below the surface of German politics. The extreme difficulties involved in creating a democratic nationalism in Germany are revealed by the attempts of conservatives such as Gerhard Schroeder in Wir Brauchen eine Heile Welt and Eugen Gerstenmaier in Neuer Nationalismus, to deal with this question. The Spiegel in an article entitled 'Neuer Nationalismus in einer heilen Welt' took quotes from both books in answer to questions about the future of Germany to show how even conservative nationalism could lead away from democracy to strong government.

THE FUTURE OF THE NPD

According to the results of studies made by government departments and public opinion research organizations a small percentage of the German population appears to be receptive to the propaganda of the radical right. For instance a public opinion survey published in late 1968 indicated that 58% of the population was opposed to the NPD, that that part of the population which was nationalistic and opposed to the NPD numbered 15%, and those who were sympathetic to the NPD included 10% of the population, ~~and~~ Only 4% admitted either membership in or adherence to the party. 13% of this sample had no opinion. Another question ~~on~~ ^{on} the same survey indicated that 83% of the population rejected the goals and intentions of the NPD, 5% were indifferent, and 12% were either sympathetic to or supporters of the program.

A more detailed analyses of the results of this survey show

adherents to and sympathizers with the NPD include a potential of 15% of German voters. This figure seems to be relatively accurate because other surveys conducted independently of one another have consistently obtained this result. The next important question concerns that group of 15% which is nationalistic but against the NPD. Additional survey material indicates that 70% of them are satisfied with the established party system, 83% are against seeing a man like Hitler in power once again, and 62% consider dictatorship very undesirable and dangerous.

This nationalist group of 15% supports certain foreign policy positions which the NPD also espouses. The important difference between the nationalists and the NPD is that the former rejects any form of totalitarian government while the latter is more sympathetic to goals and ideas which lead in that direction. In addition, common ground exists between the nationalists and the NPD as well as the NPD and a qualified majority of the population on the question of the German past, the unbewaeltigte Vergangenheit. The range of issues involving the past which provide common ground for these groups include a reaction against what is seen as retroactive condemnation of war criminals, the reparations policies of West Germany, and the attribution of sole guilt to Germany for the outbreak of World War II. Statistical results indicate that depending on the issue between 45% and 66% of the German population hold positions which are either close to or sympathetic with specific issues used by the NPD. In addition, a large portion of the German population believes that present German foreign policy is Erfuellungspolitik, another issue which they share in common with the NPD. These results seem to support the conclusion that the NPD is exploiting a 'national wave' in West Germany.

The revival of nationalism does not necessarily presage a return to Nazism, but at present is part of a more general trend in West Germany toward a more conservative politics. If there is a danger in this revival it lies in the fact that post-war democracy in the Federal Republic, like its Weimar

predecessor, is associated with policies that have both aroused and perpetuated a sense of guilt and inferiority. Thus it is possible that democracy and nationalism in Germany, as in 1848 will not be able to fuse together in a form in which the latter strengthens allegiance to the former, and the former contains and controls the latter. This may provide an opening ultimately for that substratum of German opinion that is anti-democratic and anti-western and which has remained hidden until now. At the moment, however, they still constitute a group which is discredited and on the defensive.

Another fear which some high German officials have expressed is that the attempt of the democratic parties to capture the thunder of nationalism for themselves in order to absorb the potential for the development of extremism may ~~not succeed. The consequence of this is that~~ ~~failures~~ have the consequence of making the NPD philosophy more acceptable to wider parts of German society.

At the moment, however, any realistic assessment of the future of the NPD and the Right in West Germany must take into account that the major parties and governments of the Federal Republic have contained the Right without any difficulty for twenty years. In addition, the last Bundestag election held in 1965 resulted in 96.4% of the votes cast going to the CDU, CSU, FDP and SPD. The attempts, therefore, to compare conditions in Bonn with those that existed in Weimar in order to prove that the demise of the Federal Republic is drawing near is inaccurate, especially if the better features of German political and economic life are not taken into consideration. This does not mean that serious structural weaknesses are not present in the social, economic and political systems. Many of them have been mentioned and analyzed in the body of this paper. It does mean, however, that the leadership of West Germany still has the

the power, authority and time to deal with this difficult situation, and at present neither German politicians nor foreign observers are justified in taking a fatalistic view towards the future.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROHIBITION OF THE NPD

Although Minister of Interior Ernst Benda submitted a dossier on the NPD to the West German cabinet recently, the cabinet has postponed deciding whether to petition the Federal Constitutional Court in Karlsruhe to outlaw the party. Chancellor Kiesinger, on the basis of recent Court decisions, is concerned, at least the Court reject or decide against the federal government's suit. If the Court rejects the motion, it could be interpreted as a legalization of neo-fascism. Some West German observers have also suggested that a rejection of the government's suit could be interpreted by the Right as 'the last denazification'. However, if the federal government does not make the motion, it exposes itself to the suspicion that it is indirectly encouraging a radical party of the Right about whose constitutionality it has expressed 'grave doubt'.

Politically, the problem of dealing with the NPD comes at an inopportune time because the Bonn government is trying to show the world that it is stable and confident enough to tolerate dissent by permitting the extremes of Left and Right to function openly. In this respect, the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung observed in an editorial on December 17, 1968 that the more the federal government inclines towards petitioning the Constitutional Court to outlaw the NPD, the more numerous become the voices which demand a direct political confrontation in parliament and through elections with the party. The resort to a political solution, according to the Frankfurt paper, does not mean a revaluation of the

